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LETTER DATED 11 JANUARY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SUDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Further to my letter dated 31 December 1992 (S/25041) I have the honour to enclose herewith a second message from His Excellency, Mr. Ali Sahloul, Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Sudan, No. WKh/MT/1-1/6 dated 7 January 1993 concerning the same subject.

I would be grateful if this message could be distributed to the member States as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmed SULIMAN
Permanent Representative

Annex I

[Original: Arabic]

Letter dated 7 January 1993 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan addressed to the President of the Security Council

Further to our note No. WKh/MT/1-1/16 dated 27 December 1992 concerning the aggression by the Arab Republic of Egypt against the Sudanese area of Halayib, I wish to provide you with more details concerning the developments relating the Egyptian aggression against the territory of Halayib, which is aimed at imposing a fait accompli and may lead to the escalation of armed confrontation between the two countries. This constitutes a threat to peace and security in the area, while the Sudan is anxious to resolve the dispute between the two countries concerning the Halayib area by peaceful and friendly means and within the framework of the fraternal and historic relations between them:

1. Since the beginning of 1991, Egyptian movements in the area of the Halayib triangle have been observed as indicating Egyptian intentions to occupy the area. With the steady increase in border violations by Egyptian officials, those intentions became clear, particularly when the Egyptian authorities, in November 1991, called for the lowering of the Sudanese flag that had been raised over the peace point at Shalatayn. In order to avoid friction, it was agreed that both the Sudanese and Egyptian flags should be lowered.

2. On 12 December 1991, a 150-man Egyptian force, under a major, attacked the Sudanese peace post at Shalatayn. The premises were demolished, the building materials were removed to inside Egyptian territory, and the remains were destroyed on the site.

3. In March 1992, the Egyptian authorities sent a 120-man detachment and established the Badi' 11 post 68 kilometres to the north of Halayib.

4. The events of April 1992 (Abu Ramad incident)

At 0800 hours on 4 April 1992, an Egyptian force riding in three jeeps attacked the Abu Ramad police post. That attack resulted in the deaths of two policemen and the wounding of three others. At 1100 hours, the Egyptian force withdrew from the police post, taking with it the post's weapons. The Egyptian authorities claimed that the incident was an isolated one and that the Government was in no way connected with it. They charged the officer who carried it out with misconduct and promised to impose the most severe penalties on him.

5. Military escalation following the events of April 1992

(a) On 7 July 1992, three armed jeeps under an officer with the rank of lieutenant-colonel proceeded along the coastal road.

(b) On the same date, a fixed hangar was built at the Badi' 11 post, and electricity poles were erected on the road in the village of Abu Ramad.

(c) At 0200 hours on 21 July 1992, the Egyptian Minister of Health visited Abu Ramad escorted by a force led by a lieutenant-colonel and seven jeeps.

(d) At 1230 hours on 22 July 1992, a force led by a colonel and a lieutenant-colonel arrived at Abu Ramad and set off in the direction of Bi'r Shalatayn.

(e) At 0930 hours on 23 July 1992, another force arrived with 12 armoured vehicles and likewise departed in the direction of Bi'r Shalatayn.

(f) At 0745 hours on 26 July 1992, an Egyptian military vessel anchored 7 kilometres from the Halayib naval station and departed at 1200 hours on the same day.

(g) On 29 July 1992, four Egyptian trucks carrying timber and iron girders discharged their loads to the east of the Abu Ramad post.

(h) On 29 July, an Egyptian boat arrived in the Abu Ramad area. Its crew measured sea depths and then positioned signs on the coast in front of Abu Ramad.

(i) In the period from 29 July to 1 August 1992, there were three military jeeps, under a colonel called Abd al-Aziz al-Ḍib, travelling from the Badi' 11 post to Jabal Aqumtari and 40 kilometres further north. The men were surveying the land, drawing maps and erecting signs in cement and lime.

(j) At 0700 hours on 1 August 1992, an Egyptian HAL aircraft, under the command of Brigadier-General Abd al-Mu'in, Chief of Staff for the southern region, landed in the Abu Ramad area.

(k) On 1 August 1992, a man called Salah Amir, who was appointed head of the village of Abu Ramad by the Egyptian authorities, came to Abu Ramad. It is well known that he holds the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the Egyptian intelligence service.

(l) At 0100 hours on 13 August 1992, a 30-man Egyptian force riding on seven lorries arrived in Abu Ramad.

(m) On 17 August 1992, a 20-man Egyptian force assembled in the Shalatayn area. The men carried Kalashnikovs and DShk machine-guns.

(n) The Egyptian authorities requested permission for their aircraft to enter Sudanese airspace to search for three vehicles lost in the desert. From 0130 until 0300 hours on 21 August 1992, three aircraft made flights at low altitude over Wadi Halfa airfield and the area including the Halayib triangle, their purpose being reconnaissance and photography.

6. Recent military escalation

(a) On 1 October 1992, the Egyptian forces conducted manoeuvres on the southern boundary in the area north of Shalatayn. The purpose of the manoeuvres was to train forces for the operation of restoring occupation of the disputed area. The manoeuvres were tended by the Minister of Defence and the Egyptian Chief of Staff.

(b) On the afternoon of 24 November 1992, an Egyptian force, estimated to number 600 men and riding in 20 Land Cruisers and four armoured vehicles, passed by. The force divided into two sections, the first moving westwards towards the direction of the mountains and the second eastwards towards the coast.

(c) In the period from 15 to 24 November 1992, the Egyptian forces opened six new military posts in the area extending 18 kilometres southwards from Abu Ramad. The force manning those posts is estimated at 120 men.

(d) At 1020 hours on 30 November 1992, a HAL aircraft landed at the Abu Ramad airstrip. It carried nine high-ranking officers, carried out reconnaissance over an area up to 6 kilometres from Halayib. The aircraft then took off at 1330 hours on the same day.

(e) On 6 December 1992, a HAL aircraft overflew the town of Halayib at low altitude and took photographs of the town, concentrating on the camps. It then flew to Abu Ramad, where it landed. On board were 15 military men of various ranks, who boarded small jeeps and proceeded southwards to reconnoitre the area until they arrived at the outskirts of the town of Halayib.

7. On 9 December 1992, the following occurred.

(a) At 0430 hours, an Egyptian force estimated to number 250 men arrived within 3 kilometres of Halayib.

(b) At 0500 hours, a 120-men force led by a brigadier-general, a colonel, a captain and five second lieutenants, with seven jeeps, a Land Cruiser, and four large Russian vehicles, went past the Halayib post. This force encamped on the sides of the Halayib-Port Sudan road 28 kilometres south of Halayib. The force then encamped in the form of a triangle having its apex on 22nd parallel of latitude. Then the force proceeded to position border signs from east to west along the 22nd parallel, marked with numerals from 1 to 5, at 7-kilometre intervals. On the northern side the word "Egypt" was written and on the southern side the word "Sudan".

(c) At midnight, a tanker vessel arrived and discharged its load of water at Abu Ramad.

8. At 0700 hours on 10 December, the administrative forces proceeded to supply their forces deployed to the south of the mountain road. The supply convoy consisted of two jeeps, two tankers with water and fuel and three trucks with supplies of food, weapons and ammunition.

9. On 11 December 1992, a 60-men force pitched 30 tents 14 kilometres to the south of Abu Ramad.

10. On 19 December 1992, a police post under a captain was opened to the west of Abu Ramad.

11. On 21 December 1992, the deployment of heavy machinery was observed 150 kilometres south of Shalatayn over an area of 2.5 square kilometres.

12. At 0630 hours on 21 December 1992, some civilians arrived with a drilling rig and two tents, which were pitched 2 kilometres to the west of the town of Halayib. They said that they wanted to drill, and our forces prevented them from operating. At 1700 hours on 22 December 1992, 20 Egyptian soldiers, under an officer, arrived at the location of the drilling rig. After contacts with the commander of the Halayib forces, the Egyptian force returned to a distance of 4 kilometres from Halayib.

13. On 26 December 1992, the Chairman of the Administrative Board of the Egyptian company arrived at the site of the drilling rig and said that the men were permitted to operate up to the 22nd parallel. After many deliberations on this matter, the group withdrew to a distance of 550 metres to the west.

14. On 28 December 1992, the Egyptian forces south of Halayib were strengthened with a 120-men company, which deployed within the former posts in the triangle, and two posts, with a strength of 30 men, were opened to the north of Abu Ramad.

15. On 2 January 1993, a 120-men company force deployed along the 22nd parallel, a 60-men platoon deployed 5 kilometres south of Halayib, and a 120-men company deployed to the south of Abu Ramad.

16. The total Egyptian forces introduced so far into the Halayib triangle consist of an infantry brigade of élite strike forces estimated to number 2,000 combatants.

17. On 4 January 1993, the Egyptian authorities positioned barrels at the northern entrance to Abu Ramad on the road leading to Shalatayn. A commercial vehicle was intercepted and prevented from passing, and its driver was asked to present a driving licence issued by the Egyptian authorities.

18. At the civilian level, the Egyptian forces behaved as follows:

(a) On 25 February 1992, an Egyptian delegation distributed relief supplies free of charge to citizens in Abu Ramad and continued to open and maintain schools, supply school materials to pupils and distribute notebooks with a map of Halayib on the cover.

(b) On 7 October 1992, work was commenced on the construction of the Abu Ramad Egyptian primary school on a Sudanese school licence, and the guardians of pupils were given the incentive of food and clothing supplies for themselves and their families.

(c) On 9 October 1992, an Egyptian delegation, headed by Major-General Abdullah al-Urayban and comprising 150 persons, went to Abu Ramad. Its members performed the Friday prayer in the Abu Ramad mosque, and a direct broadcast of the prayers was presented on radio and television. In his sermon, the imam focused on references to the location of the prayers: "We are now in the Abu Ramad area, which is 25 kilometres away from Halayib." The delegation returned the same day to Egyptian territory.

(d) On 19 October 1991, the Governor of the Red Sea province arrived in Halayib. He holds the rank of major-general and is called Yusri. He was accompanied by a delegation that included Engineer Hazim al-Sayyid, Deputy Minister for Public Works and Housing, and others. They laid the foundation-stone for what he referred to as the Al-Azhar school at Abu Ramad and 60 housing units and administrative buildings. On the foundation-stone was written "With the aid of God in the time of President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak".

19. Contacts at the leadership level

During the incidents at the Abu Ramad police post in April 1992, to which we have referred above, there were many contacts between the Egyptian Chief of Staff and the Sudanese Chief of Staff and between the Egyptian Director of Military Intelligence and the Sudanese Director of Intelligence. These contacts were made by telephone and through the military attachés in the two countries. They fell within the following framework:

(a) What occurred was regarded as isolated behaviour.

(b) Egypt had sent a committee to investigate, and, if there was evidence of wrongdoing on the part of any of the Egyptian local commanders or if any of them was found to be responsible for the incident, he would be subjected to exemplary punishment.

(c) The Egyptian authorities were ready to pay compensation to the families of martyrs from the Sudanese side.

(d) The Egyptian authorities were ready to host the wounded and provide them with treatment in Egyptian hospitals; a special aircraft could be dispatched to transport them.

(e) The Egyptian authorities had a sincere wish to contain the situation.

20. With regard to the same incident, an Egyptian delegation, headed by a major-general, visited the Sudan for the purpose of condolences. The delegation was met by the Minister of the Interior and some officials. The delegation took full details of the wounded and the dead and provided compensation, which was received through the Director-General of Police.

21. The Egyptian leadership, at the level of the Director of Military Intelligence, transmitted, through repeated telephone contacts and through the military attaché, totally unfounded information about Sudanese movements and the advance of additional Sudanese forces. Normally, such communications would be followed by the dispatch of forces by the Egyptian side and the establishment of additional posts inside the triangle. The Sudanese Government believes that the purpose of these contacts was to cover up the subsequent Egyptian operations in the area.

22. Following the entry of the Egyptian forces into the area south of Halayib on 9 December 1992 and the Sudan's protest about this through our military attaché in Cairo, intensive contacts also began at the level of the Chief of Staff and the Director of Egyptian Intelligence.

What we have indicated above regarding regular military and civilian intervention in Sudanese territory by the Arab Republic of Egypt clearly confirms the latter's intentions of imposing a fait accompli and annexing Halayib to Egypt by force. While affirming the Sudan's desire to pursue all peaceful and friendly means of dealing with this dispute between the two fraternal countries, the Republic of the Sudan reserves the right to use all necessary means, on the basis of the provisions of the United Nations Charter, to defend its territorial integrity and its sovereignty. Accordingly, we hope that your esteemed Council will assume its full responsibility by seeking to ensure the withdrawal of the military and civilian Egyptian presence from the Halayib area and the restoration of the situation that prevailed prior to the commencement of the above-mentioned series of acts of aggression.

(Signed) Ali SAHLOUL
Minister for Foreign Affairs

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